Joined-Up Data: Building blocks for common standards

A cross-initiative scoping study

covering:

Construction Sector Transparency Initiative

Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative

Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency

International Aid Transparency Initiative

Open Contracting

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Development Initiatives

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Introduction

In recent years, many transparency and accountability efforts have developed standards or adopted explicit principles to deal with their own governance and guide how information is published in their respective sectors. A natural step in this process of refinement is a move towards modular design, combating the complexity of the evolving standards by identifying the *building blocks* from which they are constructed. This presents the transparency initiatives with an unprecedented opportunity for collaboration. Initiatives that have so far worked in relative isolation may discover points of intersection, allowing them to share their knowledge and better meet their stakeholders' needs.

The Joined-Up Data project aims to create dialogue between these initiatives and others at the technical level. It explores areas of overlap between the disclosure requirements of different initiatives and highlights areas for potential collaboration and the establishment of shared vocabularies. By examining existing classifications, formats, and principles, the Joined-Up Data project seeks to identify common building blocks that will foster cross-sectoral learning and promote interoperability between the standards that underpin different sector-specific initiatives.

Growing interest in joining up the dots between different fiscal transparency initiatives is reflected in other collaborative efforts such as the Follow the Money[1] campaign. This seeks to bring together advocacy organisations from different sectors to develop a joint campaign that supports citizens' efforts to "follow the money". The Joined-Up Data project complements these efforts at policy and political level by focusing down on the data and exploring where technical collaboration could underpin these efforts to secure greater transparency across the board.

Dialogue around shared building blocks will bring each transparency initiative closer to achieving its goal of promoting understanding of and engagement with data. Understanding spending and its impact will only come about through connecting fiscal data to contextualising information from the world outside finance – to socio-economic indicators, global pricing data, and more. Such contextualisation will only be made possible by identifying shared building blocks to facilitate comparisons. These connections will join each initiative to what Homi Kharas has called the "data revolution", contributing to an emerging global picture of resources available to address sustainable development and global poverty.

This scoping study is a first step in the Joined-Up Data process. It suggests possible terms for the conversation around building blocks, highlights first steps that initiatives can take towards collaboration, and identifies questions to be addressed in future studies. The study explores the standardised disclosure requirements of five multi-stakeholder transparency initiatives (International Aid Transparency Initiative, Extractives Industries Transparency Initiative, Construction Sector Transparency Initiative, Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency, and Open Contracting) in search of potential areas for collaboration. It also outlines the governance processes underlying the creation of these requirements to make clear where this collaborative development can take place.

Why building blocks?

The goal of the Joined-Up Data project is to identify common building blocks: discrete, specific, and trusted modules that can be commonly used by different actors.

The initiatives considered in this scoping study have all reached considerable clarity concerning their high-level disclosure requirements. Further refinement of these requirements is likely to include improvements of depth and consistency. We believe that successful approaches will necessarily be highly *modular*, the result of clarifying the separation of concerns within each set of requirements. One of the benefits of the modular approach is the ease with which modular designs can incorporate existing solutions as new components. The Joined-Up Data project

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[1] The hyperlinks referenced in this paper can be found in the digital edition at http://devinit.org/report/joined-data-building-blocks-common-standards/

aims to bring the modular approach to the attention of disclosure standard designers and to facilitate the discovery and sharing of the building blocks for successful transparency standards.

The goal of the project is emphatically not the top-down imposition of new universal data standards but rather the bottom-up, pragmatic development of best practices relevant in the first instance at the country level. Adding further technical complexity to data standards will only aggravate the existing challenges of implementation. The Joined-Up Data project seeks instead to complement capacity-building work and implementation by delineating the subparts of disclosure standards, and allowing work to be focused on those areas of greatest commonality.

Developing core building blocks would improve each initiative's data quality and its ability to meet local needs; clarifying requirements around location coding, for example, would greatly enhance the usefulness of contracting data for parliamentarians interested in regional development. But modularising disclosure standards offers the further benefit of making it far easier to merge and compare datasets from the different initiatives as well as other sources. Many users have expressed an interest in "following the money" in this way, particularly in connecting various initiatives' datasets to government budgets and spending data.

Scope of this study

This study introduces the project's major protagonists, sets the scene for their future interactions, and hints at directions those interactions may take. It is not meant to exhaust the space of multi-stakeholder initiatives, instead covering a small selection chosen for the relative cohesion of their domains; other initiatives may enter the picture in future studies.

The study begins with an overview of each of the five transparency initiatives covered. Each overview explains the nature of the initiative, gives a detailed summary of the data collected by the initiative, discusses the initiative's use of existing building blocks and standards, and concludes by summarising the governance structures underlying the initiatives' reporting practices.

Having introduced the initiatives and their disclosure practices, the study then explores their areas of overlap. A small selection of uncontroversial and established building blocks is presented, followed by a longer discussion of areas of overlap presenting opportunities for new building blocks. Existing work on each potential building block is presented alongside references to the specific data requirements from each initiative that connect to the block and discussion of the integration challenges posed for each.

Five transparency initiatives

This chapter provides succinct overviews of five transparency initiatives and their disclosure standards. It covers the following initiatives:

- Construction Sector Transparency Initiative (CoST)
- Extractives Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI)
- Global Initiative for Financial Transparency (GIFT)
- International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI)
- Open Contracting

Each overview presents a short summary of the initiative's work, a detailed description of the contents of its disclosure standard (where this exists), a discussion of its use of international data standards or opportunities thereof, and a description of the structure of the initiative with respect to the governance processes underlying its disclosure standard. Where interviewees have provided information about implementation challenges faced by the initiative's implementers, these comments are also included.

Summary of disclosure standards

Typology
The five initiatives reviewed in this study exhibit widely differing patterns of standardisation, falling into the following three broad and non-exclusive types:

Technical standards
- IATI's disclosure standard is a complex technical standard built with XML and making use of a large number of code sheets for classification of data items.
- Future Open Contracting data standards work will seek to generate a technical standard and common approach to publishing contract data. An early prototype of this has been built on the IATI standards, and it is likely the Open Contracting standard will have much in common with IATI.

Formal requirements
- CoST's disclosure standard consists of a set of requirements articulated in prose in the CoST Programme Summary. It is supplemented by a spreadsheet "report card" used by CoST implementers.
- EITI's disclosure standard, similar to CoST's, consists of a set of precise requirements articulated in prose in the EITI Standard.

High-level principles
- GIFT's own disclosure requirements consist of high-level "norms" around disclosure policy. These requirements are at a higher level of abstraction than the other initiatives'.
- Open Contracting has so far elaborated some high-level principles for disclosure of contract information.

Recommendations
The following possibilities for further conversation between the initiatives present themselves:

- The gap between technical standards and formal requirements is largely superficial. On the level of semantics, standards of both types collect information on a well-defined set of entities with a well-defined set of possible properties. Knowledge-sharing will be facilitated by identifying these entities and their properties, and further refinement will consist of developing building blocks around them, which will involve both semantic and technical work.

- GIFT is different from all other initiatives considered in that it operates at a higher level of abstraction. Each other initiative could be seen as an implementation of GIFT's principles, and GIFT's goals are deeply compatible, if not identical, with those of Joined-Up Data.

Summary of governance practices

Typology
With respect to the governance practices underlying each initiative's data standard, the five initiatives considered in this study fall into three broad categories, with IATI playing the role of outlier:

Country-oriented
These initiatives include, on the one hand, a board responsible for setting strategy and a secretariat responsible for concretising it as a standard; on the other hand, they crucially involve autonomous multi-stakeholder groups within implementing countries who are responsible for putting the standard into action. Such standards are driven by the dialogue between the international designers and the in-country implementers, and development of the standards proceeds through codification of successes at the country level.

- The CoST requirements have been developed through experimentation at the country level and analysis of successes. In particular, the current CoST requirements are the result of a three-year pilot programme involving eight implementing countries.
- The EITI Standard is essentially the codification of the best practices of EITI implementers. Development of the standard is driven by experimentation at the country level and addition of successes to the standard.

Developing
These initiatives have not yet fully formalised their governance procedures or structure. They are currently loosely organised around a group of key stakeholders, but this can be expected to change.

- GIFT is organised around a group of five Lead Stewards. It is in the process of institutionalising and formalising its governance structures.
- Open Contracting is still formalising its governance structures, and in particular its forthcoming Open Contracting Data Standards project is expected to bring about large organisational changes.

Donor-oriented
The governance processes underlying the IATI standard do not derive from the activity of in-country multi-stakeholder groups in the same way as the EITI or CoST standards. IATI's standard was designed after consultation with both recipient country and aid donor stakeholders, but IATI does not include autonomous multi-stakeholder groups whose best practices can be incorporated into future iterations of the IATI standard.

Recommendations
It would be worthwhile to inquire after the successes and challenges of EITI and CoST's country-oriented models of standard development. The role assigned to in-country multi-stakeholder groups by these initiatives provides a distinct opportunity for local engagement even at the level of the design of disclosure standards. Those initiatives which lack such groups (whether by design or by the incompleteness of their design) may wish to consider them as a means of both bolstering demand for disclosure and remaining institutionally sensitive to this demand.

CoST

Overview

The Construction Sector Transparency Initiative (CoST) is a multi-stakeholder, country-oriented initiative promoting transparency and accountability in publicly financed construction projects. In its essential features, CoST is a framework of abstract principles that can be adapted to conditions in the context of implementing countries.

Among its principles, most relevant to the question of building blocks for data standards is CoST's principle of disclosure: "ensuring that basic information on [construction] projects is disclosed to the public at key points throughout the project cycle" (CoST Programme Summary p. 6). CoST has identified "basic information" in a concrete and specific way that lends itself to description in terms of data fields and could be cashed out in a concrete data standard.

Data collected

CoST has defined an information standard for proactive disclosure of construction project information. This standard comprises a list of pieces of information that CoST considers essential to understanding the full cycle of a construction project. The list divides into Project and Contract categories, each breaking down further into sub-categories. A procuring entity disclosing information according to this standard would provide a single set of Project information and as many sets of Contract information as there are contracts between the procuring entity and its suppliers over the course of the project, typically several (e.g. design contract, supervision contract, construction contract, etc.).

CoST's recently published Guidance Note 6 provides further details on the data collection process and CoST's requirements. The following overview of the proactive disclosure standard is informed by the contents of an unpublished spreadsheet provided by John Hawkins, and it includes notes on the expected data type associated with each requirement (where these are different from "free text").

Project Phase

Project identification
- Project owner. The government department responsible for the construction project.
- Sector & subsector. The construction (sub)sector involved in the project.
- Project name.
- Project location. The geographical locality of the project.
- Purpose. The socioeconomic purpose of the project.
- Project description. A summary description of the project.

Project preparation
- Project scope (main output). The main outputs from the project that are being taken forward into construction: type, quantity, unit.
- Environmental mitigation. A brief description of the environmental mitigation measures undertaken for the project.
- Land and settlement mitigation. A statement of the land and property acquired for the project.
- Contact details for project.
- Funding sources. The funding organisation(s) for the project.
- Funding type.
- Project budget. Budget includes land / property acquisitions, environmental mitigation measures, H&S provisions, costs for clients, consultants, and contractors, VAT, etc. [Amount in local currency]
- Project budget approval date.

Project completion
- Current project status.
- Completion cost. [Amount in local currency]
- Completion cost type. Projected or actual.
- Completion scope. [Amount in local currency]
- Completion scope type. Projected or actual.
- Reasons for project changes since commencement. Summary of primary reasons for changes in scope, time, and cost.
- Reference to audit and evaluation reports.

Contract phase

Procurement
- Procuring entity. The name of the organisation carrying out procurement.
- Procuring entity contact details.
- Procurement process.
- Contract type.
- Contract status.
- Number of firms tendering. [Number]
- Cost estimate. The original pre-tender estimate of the contract. [Amount in local currency]
- Contract administration entity. The name of the administrator of the contract, whether in-house or contractor.
- Contract title. The formal name of the contract.
- Contract firm. The name of the firm awarded the contract.
- Contract price. Contract price at award. [Amount in local currency]
- Contract scope of work. Main outputs from the contract: detailed design, supervision, project management, and/or type, quantity, unit for construction.
- Contract start date. [Date]
- Contract duration. Number of weeks from contract start date to anticipated completion date. [Number]

Implementation
- Variation to contract price. Difference between the price at contract award and the current projected price. [Amount in local currency]
- Escalation in contract price. Escalations to the price of materials, labour, equipment, etc. due to fluctuations in inflation, currency, etc. [Amount in local currency]
- Variation to contract duration. Difference between original duration at contract award and the current projected duration, in weeks. [Number]
- Variation to contract scope. Any changes between original scope at contract award and the current scope.
- Reasons for price changes.
- Reasons for scope and duration changes.

Use of external standards
CoST's disclosure requirements do not currently make use of standard codesheets, externally sourced or otherwise. The CoST requirements specify the kinds of information required rather than prescribing a particular form for reporting this information, which allows CoST to accommodate the variety of reporting systems and the range of capacities exhibited by CoST participant countries. Besides diverse capacities, the diversity of the structures of construction sectors at the national level has encouraged CoST to avoid over-encumbering its requirements with granularity.

CoST has singled out organisational identifiers as an opportunity for standardisation at the national level. Inconsistency and obscurity in the identification of procuring entities and project owners continues to dog CoST implementers; development of organisational identifiers for government entities would address these problems.

CoST has also recognised its reporting of contracts as an area of possible synergy with other initiatives, in particular Open Contracting. Indeed, CoST has expressed concerns that CoST and Open Contracting may end up duplicating work within their implementing countries or, worse, promoting confusing and conflicting requirements. Closer discussion around standards for contract data will head off these concerns.

Initiative structure

Much like EITI, the formulation of the CoST principles has proceeded on the basis of experimentation and analysis of successful results. CoST was launched in 2008 by the UK Department For International Development (DFID), whose policy work furnished an initial outline of CoST's requirements. The initiative proceeded through an 18-month experiment with pilot projects in eight countries and a further 18 months of synthesis and reflection, finally launching the present version of the programme in November of 2012.

The CoST programme is overseen by the CoST Board, whose responsibilities include designing the programme, seeking funding for it, supporting its implementations, admitting new CoST countries, and establishing CoST as a non-profit entity. CoST is a UK-registered company and charity, and its Directors are the CoST Board.

Management of CoST and provision of technical and administrative assistance to implementing countries is provided by the CoST International Secretariat, hosted by Engineers Against Poverty. The Secretariat is responsible for implementing the Board's strategic decisions in the form of guidance notes and documents, as well as for overseeing CoST's funding from the World Bank.

Implementation challenges

Like other initiatives, CoST faces severe challenges from the capacity limitations of its implementing countries. In other respects, CoST's experiences have furnished unique insights into the implementation of transparency initiatives:

- The role of political economy. The wide variety of political economic systems touched on in the CoST pilot has revealed the centrality of such matters to disclosure. CoST has observed that the centralisation of public procurement (as in e.g. Vietnam and Guatemala) potentially facilitates the collection of procurement information, whereas dispersed and liberalised economies (e.g. the UK) present serious challenges on account of fragmentation and deliberate siloing.
- Time required for data collection in low-capacity countries. Studies in Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Vietnam have shown that it takes around 10 person days to collect CoST data. The lack of information systems within procuring entities in these countries is most likely a factor in this time requirement.
- The role of in-country multi-stakeholder groups. Procuring entities involved in CoST disclosure were in general more comfortable allowing the CoST in-country multi-stakeholder groups to disclose on their behalf than they were doing it themselves. This was not only a matter of the resources necessary to get ahold of the information but also of their perceived personal liability for disclosure.
- Novelty and in-country relevance. CoST repeatedly encountered pleasant surprise from government agencies within its participating countries at the high in-country relevance of the data being collected and at its unavailability from other sources. Infrastructure UK (a department within the UK Treasury), for example, has proven an unexpected supporter of CoST's efforts.

EITI

Overview

The Extractives Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI) is a country-oriented multi-stakeholder organisation devoted to improving transparency and accountability around the management of revenues from natural resources. EITI's key contribution to the transparency standards landscape is the EITI Standard, which codifies EITI's experience of a decade of work with EITI-participating countries into a standard set of requirements for resource revenue disclosure. The core of this Standard concerns the reconciliation of government revenue receipts with extractive company payment reports, but it also encompasses licensing and contracts, production, and other expenditures related to natural resources.

Data collected

Revenues and payments

At the heart of all EITI reports is the collection and reconciliation of government reports of *revenues received* from extractive industries and extractive company reports of *payments made* to the government. Most other information presented in EITI reports is contextual information providing guidance on the interpretation of these figures. Pre- and post-reconciliation versions of revenues and payments are generally included in reports.

Revenues and payments, as presented in EITI reports, are not two distinct data types but simply a single type of *transactions* between extractive companies and government entities as reported, respectively, by governments and companies. As of the writing of this study, EITI reports are required to disaggregate transactions by revenue stream (thus leaving them aggregated across individual companies, receiving government entities, etc.); once the new requirements outlined in the EITI Standard come into force in 2014, reports will be required to disaggregate transaction data by individual company, receiving government entity, and individual project in addition to revenue stream (Requirement 5.1e).

A maximally disaggregated transaction included in an EITI report, following the disaggregation requirements outlined in the Standard, breaks down along the following dimensions:

- Amount. The amount of money represented by the transaction.
- Currency. The currency in which the amount is reported.
- Payment date. The date of the transaction.
- Paying company. The extractive company making for the payment.
- Recipient government entity. The government agency or ministry or category thereof (e.g. local and regulatory authorities) receiving the payment.
- Project. The extractive project associated with the payment.
- Revenue stream. The classification of the payment by revenue stream (taxes, royalties, bonuses, rents, license fees, etc.); see Requirement 4.1b for details.
- Revenue or Payment. Whether the transaction is a government-reported revenue or a company-reported payment.
- Reconciliation status. Whether the payment figure represents the amount originally reported or the amount arrived at through the reconciliation process.

Disaggregation by project is not widely practiced at present but has been identified as a future requirement. EITI's project-level reporting requirements will follow in the footsteps of legal project disclosure requirements now on the books in the USA and EU.

Other transactions

Several types of transactions besides payments from extractive companies to governments are covered by the EITI requirements (4.1c–f). Reporting on these transaction types varies considerably and is not applicable in all cases. Where applicable, these transactions are expected to be reported to the same level of granularity as other transactions (which, as

described above, varies between reports) and must be reconciled wherever possible. These transactions include:

- Sale of the state's share of production or other in-kind revenues
- Agreements involving the provision of goods and services in exchange for concessions or delivery of commodities
- Social expenditures and donations by companies required by law or by government contract
- Government and state-owned enterprise revenues from transportation of commodities

Production and exports

The contextual information provided by EITI reports includes disclosure of production data, including both production volumes and export volumes and the value of each (Requirement 3.5). Only aggregate figures are called for by the EITI requirements, but production information may be disaggregated by company type (e.g. SOE, foreign, local) or by individual company.

Maximally disaggregated production and export data includes the following fields:

- Commodity. The commodity produced or exported.
- Amount. The quantity of the commodity produced or exported.
- Unit. The unit of measure for the amount.
- Value. The monetary value of the amount.
- Currency. The currency of the value.
- Company. The entity responsible for the transaction.
- Company type. One of: SOE, foreign, local.
- Type. Production vs. export.
- Region. The region of production or the region of origin for export.

Contracts and licenses

The EITI standard encourages EITI countries to publish information on the licenses by which governments confer the right to explore or exploit natural resources to companies or individuals. The standard does not require that data on these licenses be published in EITI reports; instead, it requires that "a publicly available register or cadastre system" be maintained and referenced in the report (Requirement 3.9). The required information on licenses includes the following:

- License holder. The company or individual granted the license.
- Responsible entity. The government entity responsible for granting the license.
- License area. The geographical area covered by the license.
- Dates:
- Date of application.
- Date of award.
- Duration of license.
- Type. Exploration or exploitation / production.
- Commodity produced. For production licenses; otherwise not applicable.
- Licensing process. The process for awarding or transferring the license.
- Bidding applicants. Where license is awarded by bidding, the list of applicants; otherwise not applicable.

Summary data

The EITI Secretariat collects and publishes highly aggregated summary data from EITI reports on a database which is accessible in machine-readable form (XLS and CSV) through the EITI website. The database includes the following fields:

- Country name
- Years covered
- Sectors covered
- Currency

- Payments by companies (in US dollars)
- Government revenues (in US dollars)
- Includes in-kind payments (yes/no)
- Disaggregated by (revenue stream, companies)
- Coverage (State-owned company production entitlement, profits / taxes, royalties, licenses and concessions, other significant benefits to government)
- Publication date
- Name of reconciler
- Report available as a PDF (yes/no)
- Report available as an XLS (yes/no)
- Comments
- Number of companies reporting
- List of companies reporting

Use of external standards

International data standards have so far played no role in the EITI Standard. EITI's desire to accommodate the diversity of reporting practices and the range of capacities among its implementing countries has precluded the top-down imposition of data standards, and so far no such standards have emerged organically from participating countries.

EITI has identified several opportunities for standardisation in future iterations of the EITI standard:

- XBRL for company disclosure. The use of the XBRL standard for business information is widespread and growing, already ubiquitous in the UK and USA and set to expand thanks to the Dodd-Frank legislation's XBRL requirements. EITI is considering creating an EITI dialect of XBRL to simplify payment disclosure for XBRL-using companies. This EITI XBRL would not, however, be a requirement for those countries where XBRL usage is not widespread.
- IMF GFS for government revenue data. The IMF's standard for revenue classifications, the Government Finance Statistics Manual 2001, is widely used. EITI has been working with the IMF to refine its typology to capture nuances in revenue flows relevant to EITI reporting. This refined system may become EITI's standard classification system for revenue reports.
- Further refinement of the EITI reporting database. The EITI Secretariat already collects summary information from EITI reports in an internal database, and a similar database has been constructed by Revenue Watch. EITI could foster further standardisation in EITI reports by developing the categories covered by its database, e.g. by classifying revenue streams by standard categories, and encouraging reporting countries to iteratively refine their reports in response to their encoding in the database. There is some doubt among EITI developers, however, about the interest and value of cross-country comparisons at the level of granularity that would be facilitated by this iteration of the database.
- Extending EITI data with geocoding. Incorporating geospatial data is a significant area for growth, showing much potential to make EITI data more intuitively understandable and useful (e.g. facilitating map visualisations of resource exploitation licenses) as well as interoperable (e.g. making it possible to combine EITI reports with data from licensing systems to map the source of extractive revenues). Since iteration of the EITI standard is driven by best practices at the country level, EITI wishes to see examples of geocoding best practices that can demonstrate the value of geocoding to EITI's implementers.

Initiative structure

EITI is overseen by an EITI Board of 20 members, elected at the EITI Global Conference held at least once every three years and as frequently as once every two. The election of the Board is the responsibility of a Members' Meeting of representatives from each of EITI's three stakeholder constituencies (countries, companies, and civil society organisations). Nominees for Board membership are put forward by the respective constituencies.

The strategic decisions of the EITI Board are implemented by the EITI International Secretariat, body based in Oslo and hosted by the government of Norway. The Secretariat is responsible for coordinating and supporting EITI implementation efforts as well as turning the Board's policy decisions into concrete standards and plans of action.

The EITI Standard has developed as a codification of best practices. EITI began with broadly articulated principles, proceeded with a period of experimentation within implementing countries, and finally codified the resulting successes in the EITI Standard. Alongside this informal and experimental approach, the development of the EITI Standard has been driven by negotiations between its stakeholders, whose interests have often failed to coincide; the EITI Standard's soft requirement on contract reporting, for example, represents a compromise between CSO and extractive company stakeholders.

Implementation challenges

The governments implementing EITI vary widely, but the enormous majority represent developing countries and are hampered by severe capacity constraints both in technology and manpower. These constraints have led to the EITI standard being articulated at the level of principles, with the details left to implementing countries. They have also led EITI to concentrate on cheap and intelligent innovations which optimise impact against cost, with its recent $3,000 infographic contest standing out as a success—"the best [$3,000 EITI] spent all year", claimed respondent Sam Bartlett (link).

EITI has discovered an interesting tension around the issue of aggregation in EITI reports. Many of the use cases for EITI data (e.g. tracking the development of individual countries' extractives sector across time) only call for highly aggregated summary data. For a small number of high-impact cases, however, disaggregated data is necessary: investigating specific cases of corruption calls for data disaggregated to the company or even project level. EITI has wrestled with the challenge of avoiding drowning the users of its reports in irrelevant data while making sure that enough data is disclosed for the data to address its users' concerns.

GIFT

Overview

Unlike the other initiatives covered by this study, the Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency (GIFT) is not a sector-specific transparency initiative developing a standard for data or disclosure in some particular fiscal arena. Rather, GIFT is an umbrella initiative that encompasses the entire space of fiscal transparency, aiming to improve the coherence of initiatives within that domain, to foster coordination between them, and to promote global norms around them. From GIFT's perspective, each of the other initiatives covered by this scoping study is an example of such sector-specific initiatives that may implement GIFT's prescriptions for fiscal transparency.

The document which best articulates GIFT's contribution to the fiscal transparency space is its "High-Level Principles", a set of policy guidelines intended to advance global norms on fiscal transparency by clarifying the meaning of fiscal transparency, identifying country best practices, and pointing to sources of further technical guidance.

Data collected

Because GIFT's principles are articulated at a high level of abstraction, it is not particularly meaningful to construe particular datasets or data fields as implementations of the GIFT principles. As previously stated, all of the data standards produced by other the initiatives covered in this study can be seen implementations of GIFT's principles.

It is nevertheless possible to identify the key entities involved in GIFT disclosure, namely entities in the *government sector* and the *public sector*, and to single out the areas covered by GIFT's disclosure principles:

- fiscal policies
- fiscal activities (past, present, forecast, projected)
- public assets and liabilities
- goods and services produced by governments

Disclosure in these areas involves the following types of classification information:

- administrative classification of entities within the government sector
- functional classification of spending
- economic classification of spending by object of expenditure
- programme classification of spending by policy objective
- revenue, asset, and liability classifications

Use of external standards

GIFT's publications identify a multitude of country best practices and international standards with relevance to GIFT's mission. Some standards, however, stand out as being of particularly key importance:

- The UN System of National Accounts: for the definition of the government sector and public sector.
- The UN Classifications of Functions of Government (COFOG): for the functional classification of spending.
- The IMF Government Finance Statistics (GFS) Manual: for the economic classification of spending and for revenue, asset, and liability classifications.

Of these documents, the GFS Manual is the most important to GIFT's disclosure principles, providing a standard classification framework covering a wide variety of entities implicated in fiscal transparency.

A standard for programme classification of spending by policy objective has been identified by GIFT as a major gap in the landscape of standards. Although various standards have been proposed by the World Bank and IMF, these have not yet attained the status of internationally recognised standards. The IMF's Manual on Fiscal Transparency represents a significant and accessible step in the right direction.

Standards for programmeclassification have also been identified as a desideratum. Transactional spending data is of relatively little use, our GIFT respondent claims, without some classification to facilitate aggregation and matching by spending category.

GIFT, uniquely among this study's interview respondents, identified the technical side of "open data" as a major area for future discussion. Inattention to the format of fiscal data reporting as well as to intellectual property issues around fiscal disclosure will, in GIFT's view, limit the value of data produced by fiscal transparency initiatives. GIFT speculates that open data's most significant contribution may prove to be at the most granular level of fiscal transparency, i.e. in the domain of service provision and efficiency within sectors.

Initiative structure

GIFT is in the process of "institutionalising" and formalising its governance structures, with encouragement and funding supplied by the World Bank. It is currently loosely organised around a group of five Lead Stewards (the Brazil Ministry of Planning, Budget, and Management; the Philippines Department of Budget & Management; the World Bank; the International Monetary Fund; and the International Budget Partnership) responsible for debating and deciding matters of GIFT policy at meetings held roughly twice a year.

GIFT engages its stakeholders by means of its four Working Groups:

- Advancing Global Norms: developing global norms on fiscal transparency by synthesising the GIFT High-Level Principles, among other activities.
- Aligning Incentives: engaging the private sector to identify market incentives for improved transparency practices.
- Technical Assistance & Capacity Building: bringing together government reformers and innovators to share best practices around fiscal transparency.
- Harnessing New Technologies: identifying opportunities to deploy new information technologies to advance fiscal transparency.

The Stewards' work is currently facilitated and coordinated by Innovations for Scaling Impact, a multi-property entity registered in the United States that aims to scale up innovations for international collaboration. GIFT's coordination is set to change in the coming months, however, with the addition of the new position of Network Director to GIFT's governance structure. The Network Director and other support staff will continue to look to the Lead Stewards for primary oversight and direction of the initiative.

IATI

Overview

IATI is a multi-stakeholder initiative devoted to improving the transparency of aid in order to better fight poverty. The IATI Standard is its flagship product, an XML-based open standard for the publication of aid information. Some 200 organisations – including government agencies, multilaterals, foundations, international and national NGOs, development finance institutions, and the private sector – now publish their activities.

Data collected

Summary

The IATI standard is unique both in its high degree of technical specification and in its complexity. It encompasses two standards, the organisational standard and the activity standard, comprising respectively some 20 and 40 different data fields. These standards are respectively designed for reporting organisation budgets and the details of individual activities and resource flows.

The organisation standard provides a format for datasets combining information on an organisation involved in aid (donors, foundations, recipients, etc.) with information on that organisation's budget and the budgets of other organisations implicated in the organisation's aid activities. It contains information like the following:

- forward planning budgets (period & value) for:

  – the reporting agency
  – recipient organisations including multilateral contributions
  – recipient countries

- links to organisational documents such as:

  – annual reports
  – sector and country strategy papers
  – results

The activity standard, by far the more complex of the two IATI standards, is a format for reporting on aid activities, where an "activity" may be a programme, project, contract, equity, debt, etc. An IATI activity record comprises a set of annotated transactional data accompanied by contextual data that frames those transactions as an activity. The activity standard includes fields for the following information:

- activity identification and basic information
- functional and sectoral classifications
- geographic details
- transactions
- forward-looking financial information
- activity-level documentation
- outputs, outcomes and impact of activity

Use of external standards

IATI's designers have endeavoured to use standard code sheets wherever possible in designing the IATI standard. Their goal has been to take ownership only of those parts of the standard that are unique to IATI and are not covered by standards produced by some more specialised organisation.

The following are the standards explicitly credited in the metadata for IATI code lists, listed by source:

- ISO Standards

  – Country. ISO 3166
  – Currency. ISO 4217
  – Language. ISO 639

- OECD DAC/CRS

  – Collaboration type
  – Flow type
  – Finance Type
  – Aid Type
  – Sector (Purpose)
  – Policy Marker
  – Policy Significance
  – Region
  – Tied Aid Status

- IANA

  – File format for document links

- Various

  – Supra-national geographic regions
  – Sub-national administrative boundaries
  – Additional sectors
  – Organisation identifier methodologies

- IATI (inter alia)

  – Activity Status
  – Activity Date Type
  – Organisation Type
  – Organisation Role
  – Transaction Type
  – Budget Identifier
  – Economic Classification
  – Document Type

Initiative structure

IATI's course of activities are determined by the Steering Committee, a multi-stakeholder group with representatives from donors, implementing countries, CSOs, and aid experts. It meets two times a year to formulate IATI's strategy and keep the initiative on track.

The Steering Committee's strategic decisions are implemented by the Secretariat, which administers IATI's operations. The Secretariat's membership includes leadership by representatives of the United Nations Development Programme, outreach by representatives from Ghana and Sweden, logistics by representatives of the United Nations Office for Project Services, and technical work by members of Development Initiatives.

Open Contracting

Overview
Open Contracting is a collaborative effort to develop and promote global norms for disclosure and participation in public contracting. It is still in its early stages of formalisation and development. Its leadership, the recently-christened Open Contracting Partnership, prominently includes the World Bank Institute and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, as well as fellow transparency initiative CoST.

Among the OCP's planned activities is development of an Open Contracting Data Standard (OCDS). Scoping studies and prototyping have already been carried out for the standard, and development of the first production release will begin soon after the OGP Summit.

Data collected
The Open Contracting Data Standard is still in its planning stages, with development of a "beta" version of the standard expected to begin in November 2013 and to continue for 12 to 14 months.

An exploratory exercise in constructing a data standard for contracts and assessing its coverage was performed early in 2013. The result of this five-day development sprint was an extremely preliminary draft of a standard, strongly inspired by IATI in structure and content, that was presented at the ODI on March 28th 2013 (link) and later compared with procurement data collected in Nepal (link). The draft has no direct connection to the forthcoming OCDS and serves only as a contribution to the discussion around standards that will drive the OCDS's development.

A detailed overview of the data fields in the draft OCDS standard comparable to the overview provided for the IATI standard would be possible, facilitated by the draft's excellent documentation, but the draft's lack of status makes such an overview otiose. A summary description of critical fields likely to appear in future versions of the standard is included instead, drawing on the form and content of the draft.

Organisation data
- Organisation ID. A unique identifier for the contracting organisation.
- Contact information. Fields for organisation contact individuals.

Contract / activity data

Overall contract information
- Contract ID. A unique identifier for the entire contract project.
- Category. A classification of the contract's category (goods, services, etc.).
- Sector. The contract's economic sector.
- Line item IDs. Identifiers for product or service covered by contract.
- Performance location. Geodata on the geopolitical area affected by the contract.
- Related documents. Links to external documents relevant to the contract.

Per-phase data
Data must be provided for each of the stages of the contracting process (tender; bid; award; performance; review; etc.). As modeled in the draft data standard, the data collected on each phase of the contracting process is fairly similar, comprising versions of the following fields:

- Phase dates. Dates for key events in the phase of the process (e.g. for bid: opening, closing, deadline for clarification enquiries).
- Type. A classification of the method or process used for the phase.

- Value. The sum of money associated with the phase (budget for bid, total award for award, etc.).
- For the performance phase, this should be replaced or supplemented by a list of individual payments or transactions.
- Line items. The identity and quantity of deliverables covered by the contract (budgeted in bid, agreed in award, produced in performance, etc.).
- Scheduled work dates. Scheduled dates for start and end of work phase, relative to phase in the process (e.g. planned dates for bid; agreed dates for award; actual dates for performance; etc.)

Use of external standards

It is too early to comment on Open Contracting's use of data standards, as development has not begun on the OCDS. Nevertheless, Open Contracting developers foresee the need for standards in the following areas:

- organisational identifiers
- contract identifiers
- descriptions of contract periods (e.g. procurement start & end; contract start & end)
- models of the structure / phases of the procurement process
- descriptions of financial flows (contracted payments, actual payments, etc.)
- location information: geocoding, regional descriptions
- links to related documents

Open Contracting has not yet begun work on scoping existing standards and vocabularies. It has been preliminarily suggested that the EU Common Procurement Vocabulary (link) could contribute to the initiative's work.

Initiative structure

The Open Contracting project is still in the process of formalising its governance structures. The initiative's structure presently comprises the Open Contracting Partnership, formerly the steering committee, which coordinates the project's activities. Further governance structure is expected to develop in response to the setting of the parameters of the Open Contracting Data Standard project, which will be a major focus of Open Contracting activity in the months to come.

Towards building blocks

Despite their diversity of domains and levels of formalisation, the disclosure requirements promoted by the initiatives covered in this scoping study have many features in common. These commonalities are apparent at all levels of granularity, from shared classification dimensions which could be covered by common code sheets or methodologies to subgroups of data types that could constitute standards unto themselves.

While this study focused specifically on the intersections between the technical standards that have been developed, or are under development, by the five participating transparency initiatives, interview responses point to other areas of commonality where there appears to be scope for further collaboration. For example, several respondents raised the challenges of implementation, where there could be value in sharing experiences. Similarly, there could be opportunities for cross-learning with regard to the governance of multi-stakeholder transparency initiatives, and to the future development of policy.

This chapter provides an overview of the most salient points of comparison between the initiatives' requirements, identifying easy opportunities for standardisation where they exist. "Uncontroversial standards" summarises those common types of data for which universally accepted standards exist and where implementation of standards would pose no problems. "Opportunities for standardisation" describes more challenging and potentially rewarding areas for future work.

Uncontroversial standards

Currency
All transparency initiatives covered in this study promote disclosure of information about transactions of quantities of money. This information should always be coded for currency. A universally recognised standard for currency codes exists in the ISO 4217 standard.

Date
All standards considered in this study record a variety of significant dates. It is important that the format of dates within datasets be fixed and available for inspection; errors of interpretation can result from misunderstood or badly formatted dates. Consistent use of the ISO 8601 date standard would prevent such errors.

Language
The IATI standard codes for the language of virtually all plaintext fields in IATI datasets, and the prototype draft of the Open Contracting data standard codes linked documents for language. It would be worthwhile for EITI and CoST to include language information on documents referenced in their reports. A recognised standard for language codes is available in the ISO 639 language codes.

Opportunities for standardisation

Open Contracting	CoST	EITI	IATI	Data type
entire standard	contract category	licenses	—	Contracts
contract performance location	project location	exploitation license area; region of production; transportation route	recipient region; activity scope; transaction location: administrative region; coordinates; gazetteer	Geodata
contracting organisation; supplier organisation	project owner; procuring entity; contract administration entity; contracting firm	extractives company; state-owned enterprise; reporting government agency	reporting organisation; participating organisation	Organisational identifier
organisation contact individual	project preparation contact	—	activity contact	Contact information
line items	project scope	commodity production	—	Goods: production and export
total bid; total award; performance payments	project budget; cost estimate; contract price; variation to price	payments and revenues; sale of state's share of production; transportation revenues; social expenditures	transactions; budget items	Money values
contract ID	construction project	project of transaction	activity identifier	Project identifier
contract document; external document links	audit and evaluation reports	budget, expenditure, and audit reports; resource licenses; contract disclosure policies	organisation documents; activity document links	Related documents
—	—	revenue stream	finance type	Resource flows categorisation
sector	purpose	—	sector; policy marker	sector

High priority

Contracts

Contracts are relevant to every transparency initiative, and every initiative's requirements touch on contracting to some extent.

- IATI: *no explicit encoding of contracts* (but activities or components thereof are often contractual)
- EITI: exploration and exploitation licenses
- CoST: contract information
- Open Contracting: entire standard

It seems clear that all initiatives examined in this study would gain from supporting Open Contracting's work on norms for disclosure and standards for data around contracting. Work done by Open Contracting would be available for incorporation into each initiative's own requirements and standard.

Embedding the future Open Contracting standard into the IATI standard in particular may prove non-trivial. Contract activities can be construed as particular cases of IATI Activities, and thus simply incorporating the Open Contracting Data Standard as a new set of fields (e.g. "Contracts") would result in a great deal of duplication within IATI Activity datasets. Matching OCDS fields against IATI Activity fields and adding new fields to cover the gaps (e.g. new fields for dates in the contracting process, information on bidding and awards, etc.) would produce a more elegant result but require much more work.

Geodata: locations and sub-national administrative areas

All standards considered in this study make reference to geographical locations.

- IATI: supra-national region; activity scope; activity location: sub-national administrative areas; coordinates; gazetteer identifiers
- EITI: area of resource exploitation licenses; regions where extractive production is concentrated (contextual data); transportation routes
- CoST: project location
- Open Contracting: contract performance location

The insight into the spatial structure of spending made possible by geocoding data is powerful enough to qualify as basic to the usability of spending data. A recent pilot study on geocoding procurement and results data performed in Nepal by Development Gateway and the Open Aid Partnership makes a persuasive case for not only the usefulness of geocoding but also the feasibility of non-trivial geocoding projects. Geocoding will only grow in importance as the interoperability of different initiatives' standards becomes a priority, as sub-national area codes would provide a natural means of merging and comparing datasets from different sectors.

It is therefore unfortunate that there is no one source of geospatial data adequately covering the world's administrative boundaries, the geospatial unit most relevant to each transparency initiative's standards. In particular, the Second Administrative Level Boundaries (SALB) dataset originally used in the IATI standard suffers from incompleteness, imprecision, and lack of ongoing development; other sources (e.g. FAO GAUL, GADM, UNOCHA) suffer from similar problems.

Where consistent international data compilations fail, however, national data sources present an opportunity. In-country sources generally exist (national statistics offices, ministries of planning, UN surveys, etc.) and can meet individual initiatives' needs for administrative region coding. Standardising national systems and streamlining their availability to international standards is the way forward in this field.

Each initiative's work on improving its reporting of geographical regions can proceed in two directions: establishing norms around consistency and recognition of country-level

administrative boundaries; and identifying a suitably flexible technical metalanguage for capturing fine-grained geographical data. IATI's work on the Open Geospatial Consortium's Geography Mark-up Language standard is a step towards the latter. The former should become a focus of each initiative's facilitation efforts in implementing countries.

Organisational identifiers

Each of the standards calls for data on the identities of the entities involved in the activities covered by the standard. These organisational entities divide, inter alia, into government organisations, non-governmental organisations, and private companies.

- IATI: reporting organisation; participating organisation (by role)
- EITI: extractives company; state-owned enterprise; reporting government agency
- CoST: project owner (government); procuring entity (government); contract administration entity; contracting firms
- Open Contracting: contracting organisation; supplier organisation

Identifiers for NGOs and companies are largely a solved problem. Implementing countries will generally have their own registries of identifiers for private companies and charities, and transparency initiatives can defer to these registries for identification schemes. This approach is standard within IATI and the OpenCorporates Database, and IATI has begun to collect a list of national registries used in IATI. Despite the existence of charity registries, NGOs are not necessarily subject to the same stringent registration requirements as companies and thus pose some challenges, but new initiatives like the Basic Registry of Identified Global Entities (blog post) are working to address these.

Government agency identifiers are a much harder and still unsolved problem. Such entities are not subject to the same reporting requirements as private companies or NGOs—authoritative registries of government entities do not exist—and tend to undergo frequent splits, merges, and changes of name. There is not even a clear consensus on what kind of entity government identifiers should refer to; possibilities include legal entities, bank accounts, and funding streams.

Relatively few organisational standard proposals are aimed at government entities in particular. One example is the Open Knowledge Foundation's Public Bodies database, which aims to provide "a URL for every part of government"; its representation of organisations follows the Popolo organisation spec. Among those organisational standard projects not specifically devoted to government entities, the recently proposed Global Legal Entity Identifier System deserves mention: having been initiated by the G20 nations and the international Financial Stability Board, the GLEIS project is likely to receive widespread support at the policy level, making it a strong candidate for a common government entity identifier standard.

As government entity identifiers are a common requirement for all initiatives, further collaboration around this issue is important. A sound solution to the problem of government entity identifiers would not only greatly enhance the usability of datasets within individual initiatives, allowing information on government agency activities to be easily retrieved and compared, but would also facilitate extremely interesting connections between datasets of different types.

Other opportunities

Contact information

Most standards considered include data fields for contact individuals.

- IATI: activity contact
- CoST: project preparation contact
- Open Contracting: organisation contact individual

Standards for contact information already exist, including the Versit Consortium's vCard standard (and its XML- and JSON-based syntactic variants xCard and jCard). Making use of these standards would potentially simplify the disclosure of business contact information.

Further development of the contact information building block could consist in developing a shared classification vocabulary for contacts along the lines suggested previously for linked documents.

Goods: production and transfer
Several standards include fields to report on production of commodities, exports, and other transactions involving quantities of goods.

- EITI: commodity production and exports
- CoST: project scope; scope at completion
- Open Contracting: line items

In the EITI standard, commodity production figures are accompanied by data providing necessary context (commodity type, unit of measurement, value, value date, etc.). The preliminary draft of the Open Contracting data standard suggests that it would include at least type

Although IATI is able to capture information on transactions of goods "in kind" simply by reporting them as normal values (the values of the goods transacted), IATI lacks fields for contextual information specific to transactions of goods (type, unit, per-unit value, etc.), but improvements covering technical cooperation and aid-in-kind are being considered.

Money values, contextualised
Every standard includes fields for transactions of money (whether planned or actual).

- IATI: transactions; forward-looking budgets
- EITI: payments and revenues; sale of state's share of production; transportation revenues; social expenditures
- CoST: project budget; cost estimate; contract price; variation to price
- Open Contracting: total bid; total award; performance payments

These fields all, to a greater or lesser extent in the different standards, include contextual information to guide their interpretation.

- currency
- value date for currency conversion
- performance status (estimated, projected, planned, actual, …)

The final piece of contextual information listed above, the "status" of the transaction, is the crux of the definition of this shared component. There is some disagreement over whether actual, completed transactions and planned transactions represent two specific instances of a general category (values of type "actual" and "planned", respectively) or represent two entirely separate and incommensurable categories. IATI has already taken the former side of the issue by representing commitments, disbursements, guarantees, and other quantities of money by different Transaction Type codes (codelist); the other standards treated in this study remain agnostic.

Further discussion of this issue would be worthwhile, and consideration should be given to other approaches to spending data which follow the "one general type" approach, including the OpenSpending data model.

Project identifiers
Each data standard examined called for some identification of the project(s) covered by the data standard. Definitions of "projects" vary as widely as one would expect from the diverse domains of the standards, but each can be seen as a specific case of a generic category of economic

activities with non-trivial temporal extent, potentially extending across multiple transactions and covering periods of time.

- IATI: activity identifier
- EITI: project associated with transactions
- CoST: construction project
- Open Contracting: contract ID

Incorporating methodologies for unique project identifiers into data standards should not present serious technical challenges, as organisations typically maintain registries of identifiers for their activities. The challenges are instead political. One interviewee for this study reported that project identifiers are one of the most controversial subjects in fiscal transparency, representing a level of disclosure that few private companies are comfortable with. The inclusion of project identification in every standard under examination, however, testifies to the importance of such identifiers—the battle for project identifier disclosure is therefore one that transparency initiatives should be fighting together.

Related documents
All data standards considered include the ability to link in documents related to datasets.

- IATI: Organisation documents; Activity document link
- EITI: links to publicly available budget, expenditure, and audit reports; references to resource licenses; reference to contract disclosure policies
- CoST: reference to audit & evaluation reports;
- Open Contracting: contract document; external documents

Development of the document-linking component of each standard will involve, in the first instance, developing (or refining, in IATI's case) a classification scheme for linked document types. This development will most likely proceed through codification, recognition, and refinement of document categories existing at the country level.

Besides codes for document types, document links could be enhanced with references to subparts of documents and/or mark-up formalisation of the semantics of documents. Some work in this direction has been done by [Revenue Watch](#) using [DocumentCloud](#). Open Contracting in particular is likely to benefit from work in this area, as annotated contract documents would be especially useful additions to contracting datasets.

Resource flows categorisation
A comparison can be made between three standards' classifications for the type of resource flow implicated in transactions:

- IATI: OECD-defined collaboration, flow, finance, and aid types
- EITI: revenue stream
- CoST: funding type

These three categorisations are fairly heterogeneous. The IATI classification concerns varieties of aid (and official development assistance in particular); the EITI breakdown of transactions concerns the different sources of government revenues (taxes, royalties, dividends, license fees, etc.); and the CoST classification, the most granular, concerns the nature of the funding entity responsible for a contracting project (donor, private, national government, local government, etc.).

What is most enlightening about the comparison between these rather different categorisation schemes is the contrast that emerges between IATI and the other two standards. Whereas EITI and CoST both make use of categories with in-country relevance, IATI's classification adopts the perspective of international aid donors. This is potentially problematic, as IATI activities have dimensions of "local" interest that remain hidden from this vantage point.

IATI could be brought into line with the other initiatives' local orientation by harmonising its categorisation scheme with the IMF's Government Finance Statistics system. EITI has already experimented with coding revenue streams according to the GFS system, with some success. Where IATI Activities involve a government actor as either donor or recipient, it should be possible to apply GFS codes: aid activities are, from the perspective of country recipients, simply a form of revenue. Adopting GFS in this way would improve the relevance of IATI data for IATI-implementing countries.

Sector / socioeconomic purpose

At least three initiatives considered already call for data on the socioeconomic purpose of projects.

- IATI: sector; policy marker
- CoST: purpose
- Open Contracting: sector

As for the missing initiative, EITI, it is possible to imagine granular sector data providing further useful contextual information on quasi-fiscal activities and sub-national transfers and payments.

IATI's primary vocabulary for socioeconomic purpose codes is drawn from OECD DAC/CRS, though COFOG and NTEE are also referenced. A general, non-aid-specific system like COFOG could serve as a useful and interoperable basis for further development in CoST and the other standards.

Conclusions

The five initiatives covered in this preliminary study have much to discuss. The overlaps between their disclosure requirements are numerous, and the opportunities for collaboration around key building blocks are rich.

Three building blocks stand out as particularly vital, simultaneously offering the most serious challenges and promising the greatest benefits. These building blocks should serve as the focus of the next stage of discussion around Joined-Up Data.

- Government entity organisational identifiers: technical specification and in-country implementation.
- Sub-national administrative geodata: best practices and implementation challenges.
- Contracts: clarifying initiatives' needs to Open Contracting.

The different governance structures underlying the disclosure standards of the five initiatives considered in this study suggest a particular manner in which the initiatives can learn from one another.

- Country-oriented initiatives like EITI and CoST are intimately familiar with the implementation challenges that transparency initiatives face "on the ground", and they also have a unique and valuable perspective on possible local use cases for transparency data. These initiatives can take the lead in ensuring that building blocks are designed in response to local capacities and needs.
- Initiatives with a more technical orientation like IATI and Open Contracting bring a wealth of experience in translating policy decisions into concrete designs, as well as a familiarity with the wider world of existing building blocks. These initiatives can provide guidance on the concrete form taken by standards at a later and more advanced stage in the collaboration.
- GIFT, as a higher-order policy-oriented initiative, is in a good position to provide guidance on the organisation of the Joined-Up Data project itself and the coordination of its activities. The Joined-Up Data project can indeed be seen as an implementation of GIFT's goals in the arena of data standards.

Much work remains to be done on constructing a comprehensive map of the space of transparency initiative data standards. Further scoping research for the Joined-Up Data project can broaden the project's scope by considering a more inclusive range of transparency and governance initiatives and deepen its impact by looking more closely into the shape of data collected in initiatives already considered. There is also an urgent need to cover the same ground covered in this study from the data user (rather than the publisher) point of view.

Notes

Notes